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INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 WINDHOEK 000340

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SNAR WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: INCSP PART I, DRUGS AND CHEMICAL CONTROL

REF: STATE 100970

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I. Summary
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11. (SBU) While occasionally used as a drug transit point, Namibia is not a major drug producer or exporter. Nevertheless, statistics compiled in 2008 showed a marked increase in illegal drug seizures compared to previous years, with approximately \$570,000 worth of drugs (1383 kilograms of marijuana, plus extremely small quantities of Mandrax (methaqualone), cocaine, and Ecstasy) seized between April 2007 and March 2008. Drug abuse remains an issue of concern, especially among economically disadvantaged groups. Narcotics enforcement is the responsibility of the Namibian Police's Drug Law Enforcement Unit (DLEU), which lacks both manpower and resources to fully carry-out its mission. Namibia is not a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention. End Summary.

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II. Status of Country
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12. (SBU) Namibia is not a significant producer of drugs or precursor chemicals. No drug production facilities were discovered in Namibia in 2008.

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III. Country Actions Against Drugs in 2008
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Policy Initiatives.

13. (SBU) Namibia has requested United Nations (UNODC) assistance in completing a National Drug Master Plan. While Namibia has not said precisely when it will become a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, many Convention requirements are already reflected in Namibian law, which criminalizes cultivation, production, distribution, sale, transport and financing of illicit narcotics. Namibia's Parliament passed the Prevention of Organized Crime Act (POCA), designed to combat organized crime and money laundering, in 2004, and the Government intends to issue regulations and place POCA into effect in late 2008, or early 2009. In July 2007, Parliament passed the Financial Intelligence Act (FIA) and the Government intends to issue regulations and place FIA into effect also in late 2008, or early 2009. The Combating of the Abuse of Drugs Bill was tabled in Parliament in 2006, but has yet to be passed. If passed, it would ban the consumption, trafficking, sale and possession of dangerous, undesirable and dependence-inducing substances. Namibia is also a signatory to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The Namibian Anti-Terrorism Activities Bill and Drugs Control Bill are still under consideration. Once fully implemented and harmonized, the new legislation will allow for asset forfeiture and other narcotics-related prosecution tools.

Law Enforcement Efforts.

14. (SBU) Namibia fully participates in regional law enforcement cooperation efforts against narcotics trafficking, especially

through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs' Cooperative Organization (SARPCCO). The Minister of Safety and Security and working level officials meet regularly with counterparts from neighboring countries to discuss efforts to combat cross border contraband shipments (including narcotics trafficking).

¶ 15. (SBU) According to official statistics (published in April every year), police seized the following from April 2007 to March 2008:

	2007*	2006**	

Cannabis	1383	422	kilograms
Cocaine powder	32	0.9	kilograms
Crack cocaine	528	257	dosage units
Ecstasy	394	1192	tablets
Methaqualone	381	634	tablets

* Statistics collected April 2007 to March 2008

** Statistics collected April 2006 to March 2007

¶ 16. (SBU) In November 2007, Namibian Police seized 544 kilograms of cannabis, the largest single seizure in Namibian history. Drug related arrests increased from 526 people in 2006, to 863 in ¶ 2007.

Namibian Police's Drug Law Enforcement Unit (DLEU), continues to lack the manpower, resources and equipment required to fully address the domestic drug trade and transshipment issues. For example, the DLEU only has sniffer dogs in Windhoek to carry out its enforcement activities, while other transit points lack coverage.

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Corruption.

¶ 17. (SBU) As a matter of government policy, the Government of Namibia does not encourage or facilitate illicit production or distribution of narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances, or the laundering of proceeds from illegal drug transactions. Similarly, no senior government official is alleged to have participated in such activities.

Agreements and Treaties.

¶ 18. (SBU) Namibia is not a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention; however, it is a party to the 1961 UN Single Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances. Namibia also is a party to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols against migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, and to the UN Convention against Corruption. The United States and Namibia do not have a bi-lateral extradition or mutual legal assistance treaty. In 2006, however, Namibia designated the United States as a country to which Namibia could extradite persons, and there is a pending extradition case. In addition, there has been excellent cooperation regarding legal assistance between both countries.

Drug Flow/Transit.

¶ 19. (SBU) Namibia's excellent port facilities and road network, combined with weak border enforcement, make it a likely transshipment point for drugs en route to the larger and more lucrative South African market. DLEU (Drug Law Enforcement Unit) personnel believe much of the transshipment takes place via shipping containers either offloaded at the port of Walvis Bay or entering overland from Angola and transported via truck to Botswana, Zambia and South Africa. Inadequate staffing and training, inadequate screening equipment, and varying levels of motivation among working-level customs and immigration officers at Namibia's land border posts all prevent adequate container inspection and interception of contraband. Inconsistently applied immigration controls also make Namibia an attractive transit point for Africans en route to or from Latin America for illicit purposes. The current maritime security posture does not allow the Namibian police, naval, and port authorities to monitor maritime activities outside the 5 km

outer anchorage area of Namibia's major ports in Walvis Bay and Luderitz. It has been reported that drug traffickers have been able to exploit this weakness by using small crafts to meet larger vessels outside these controlled areas. The Namibian Navy assists the police and customs officials with better patrolling of Namibia's Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and expected to have a mission capable fleet by mid-2008, but due to resource constraints had to postpone this activity until 2009.

Domestic Programs/Demand Reduction.

¶10. (SBU) Drug treatment programs are available from private clinics, and to a lesser extent from public facilities. The vast majority of treatment cases in Namibia are for alcohol abuse, with the remainder divided evenly between cannabis and Mandrax (methaqualone). There is also increasing evidence of the problem of cocaine use in Namibia.

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IV. U.S. Policy Initiatives and Programs
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Policy Initiatives.

¶11. (SBU) The USG continues to support Namibian participation in law enforcement training programs at the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Gaborone, Botswana. Most of these training programs include counternarcotics modules. Representatives of several Namibian law enforcement agencies (Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Prison Service, the Namibian Police, and the Anti-Corruption Commission) and prosecutors have participated in ILEA training. The police have repeatedly stated their willingness to cooperate with the USG on any future narcotics-related investigations. The U.S. Department of the Treasury is assisting Namibia with the establishment and development of the Financial Intelligence Center to fully implement the Financial Intelligence Act.

The Road Ahead.

¶12. (SBU) The USG will continue to coordinate with relevant law enforcement bodies to allow them to take advantage of training opportunities at ILEA Botswana and elsewhere, and will assist the Government of Namibia in any narcotics investigation with a U.S. nexus.